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## Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable TOM UDALL, a Senator from the State of New Mexico.

### PRAYER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Today's opening prayer will be offered by Rev. Rebecca Spencer, senior pastor of Central Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, Providence, RI.

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Shall we pray.

Gracious and loving God, we thank You for Your presence with us. You offer wisdom and perspective and grace. We ask Your blessings to be upon these elected representatives. May all that we do reflect Your purpose that we live together as Your children in harmony and freedom. May Your blessings and our work bring real hope to those who may be struggling or oppressed.

We do ask for Your special blessings to be with those who serve our country in the military—at home, at sea, in the air, and foreign countries. Shield them from danger as they work for peace.

This is indeed a gift of a new day You have given to us. May all our endeavors honor You and may we all serve the cause of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness in this beloved land of ours. May we truly do justice and love kindness and walk humbly with You, our God.

Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable TOM UDALL led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

### APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication

to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. INOUE).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,  
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,  
Washington, DC, April 19, 2012.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable TOM UDALL, a Senator from the State of New Mexico, to perform the duties of the Chair.

DANIEL K. INOUE,  
President pro tempore.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

### VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2011—MOTION TO PROCEED

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 1925, which the clerk will report by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to S. 1925, a bill to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act of 1994.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I would yield to my friend from Rhode Island.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Rhode Island is recognized.

### WELCOMING THE GUEST CHAPLAIN

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I thank the majority leader for that courtesy. I will only take a moment to recognize and welcome Rev. Rebecca Spencer who shared with us the prayer that began the Senate session this morning.

She has been the senior pastor of the Central Congregational Church in Providence, RI, since 1988. It was my congregation for the years that I lived in Providence. My wife and I renewed our vows under her care. She is a wonderful and thoughtful preacher from the pulpit. Her church has perhaps the best musical and choral program certainly anywhere in Rhode Island and probably for a good distance around. If you have not heard the "Hallelujah Chorus" sung at Easter at Central Congregational Church, you have missed an extraordinary experience.

But her greatest contribution in a community that she has served now for 24 years has been pastoral work with the families who make Central Congregational their home and the home of their faith. From birth to baptisms and for kids coming up through the youth programs the church runs, through marriages and unfortunately sometimes divorces, and through illness and death, Reverend Spencer is a wonderful friend and a wonderful solace and a wonderful gift to all of the congregation that she serves.

She is joined today by her sons Tom and Ezra. We welcome them as well, and are delighted that she has taken the time to come down from Providence, RI.

I thank our Chaplain, Chaplain Black, for his courtesy in helping to facilitate this visit.

I yield the floor.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

### SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the Senate is now considering the motion to proceed to the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act. Following my remarks and those of the Republican leader, if any, the first hour will be equally divided between the two sides. The Republicans will control the first 30 minutes, the Democrats the final 30 minutes.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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